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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1188
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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 04 ATHENS 001685

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SUBJECT: Greece: New Government Tackles Migration and Asylum Issues

REF: A) ATHENS 315; B) ATHENS 1349; C) ATHENS 1641; D) ATHENS 2038

CLASSIFIED BY: Daniel V. Speckhard, Ambassador; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

[¶1.](#) (C) SUMMARY: Greece's new PASOK-led government has placed migration and asylum policy reform high on its agenda, announcing new measures to

Migration: A Key Geopolitical and Social Challenge -----

[¶2.](#) (SBU) Greece has become the EU entry point of choice for illegal migrants and refugees, many of whom seek residence in Western Europe and s

[¶3.](#) (C) While nearly half of all illegal migrants come from neighboring Albania, the more visible surge in immigrants from conflict zones in th
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[¶4.](#) (S) The large number of migrants entering Greece also poses risks. As an example, in July, Greek authorities deported Iraqi citizen Mu'amma

Greece to Reform Much-Criticized Asylum Policies -----

[¶5.](#) (SBU) For the last several years, international organizations and regional and domestic NGOs have roundly criticized Greece for its treatme
[¶6.](#) (SBU) Greece's new PASOK government has committed to addressing many of these concerns, and has moved quickly to revamp asylum processes a

New Migration Policies and "Europeanizing" Enforcement -----

[¶7.](#) (C) The government's dire fiscal straits may politically

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hamstring the government's broader agenda to reshape enforcement and asylum policy, so officials have proposed additional specific migration re

[¶8.](#) (C) Because of these domestic shortfalls in migration enforcement, the Greeks have also focused on "Europeanizing" the issue, using a three

[¶9.](#) (C) The Greeks have been successful at gaining the attention of EU leaders. In July, EU Justice Commissioner Jacques Barrot noted that unc

COMMENT: Not Just a Greek Issue, but a European One -----

[¶10.](#) (C) As the migration doorway into Europe, Greece shoulders a disproportionate burden of illegal immigrants and asylum seekers. However, th

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Asia, and Africa, are applicable to all European nations. Migration is a key crosscutting political, national security, human rights, and socic